

Message Text

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11/44

ACTION OFA-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 OES-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1814

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION USEC

OECD PARIS

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 3409

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN SHOULD READ 3409 VICE 3509)

USDOC PASS R W SCHONING, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL MARINE
FISHERIES SERVICE

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB EFIS DA

SUBJ: BLOCKADE OF FISHING PORTS

SUMMARY: A BLOCKADE OF DANISH PORTS BY DISSATISFIED FISHERMEN
HAS DEVELOPED INTO A CHALLENGE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WILL AND
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CAPACITY TO ENFORCE ITS FISHERIES POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1) A TOTAL BLOCKADE OF FISHING PORTS IN DENMARK HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED DURING THE PAST FIVE DAYS BY INDEPENDENT FISHERMEN DISSATISFIED WITH THE PROHIBITION ON FURTHER HERRING AND COD FISHING IN THE NORTH SEA WHICH THE MINISTER FOR FISHERIES, POUL DALSAGER, DECLARED IN MID-NOVEMBER, WHEN THE DANISH QUOTA WAS FILLED. COMMENCED BY FISHERMEN IN THE NORTH JUTLAND PORTS OF ESBJERG AND HANSTHOLM, WHO TIED THEIR VESSELS SIDE BY SIDE ACROSS THE HARBOR ENTRANCES, THE BLOCKADE MOVEMENT HAS SPREAD TO INCLUDE VIRTUALLY ALL DANISH PORTS EXCEPT COPENHAGEN AND HELSINGOR. THE IMMEDIATE OBJECT OF THE BLOCKADE HAS BEEN TO STOP THE LANDING OF FISH BY VESSELS OF OTHER STATES WHICH HAVE NOT YET FILLED THEIR QUOTA. IN ADDITION, IT HAS SERVED TO DEMONSTRATE THE FISHERMEN'S GENERAL DISCONTENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY. UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT SUCCEEDS IN BREAKING THE BLOCKADE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, IT COULD EXPAND TO AFFECT ORDINARY SHIPPING AND FERRY TRAFFIC.

2) FISHERIES MINISTER POUL DALSAGER WAS FORCED TO RETURN PREMATURELY NOVEMBER 15 FROM THE FAO CONFERENCE IN ROME TO FACE THE INCREASINGLY SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO HIS FISHING POLICY. HIS FIRST ACT WAS TO ANNOUNCE AN AGREEMENT WITH NORWAY UNDER WHICH THE DANISH COD QUOTA WAS INCREASED BY 2500 TONS IN RETURN FOR NORWEGIAN FISHERMEN RECEIVING 7500 TONS OF THE DANISH QUOTA ON WHITING. THIS AGREEMENT WAS, DALSAGER SAID, APPROVED BY THE NORTH EAST ATLANTIC FISHERIES COMMISSION, PRESENTLY MEETING IN LONDON.

3) THIS MODEST QUOTA INCREASE--ABOUT ONE WEEK'S NORMAL CATCH FOR THE DANISH FISHING FLEET--WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY THE FISHERMEN. THEY HAVE LONG BEEN OPPOSED TO FOREIGN FLAG VESSELS BEING PERMITTED TO LAND FISH IN DENMARK (SOME OF THEM ARE ABLE TO SELL THEIR FISH AT ADVANTAGEOUS PRICES SINCE THEY ARE NOT BOUND BY THE EC SUBSIDY SYSTEM) AND THEY ARE DETERMINED TO WIN SOME CONCESSION ON THIS POINT. DALSAGER, CONCERNED WITH THE INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT IF THE FISH PROCESSING FACTORIES ARE FORCED TO SHUT DOWN, HAS REFUSED THIS DEMAND. HE HAS MAINTAINED IN TELEVISED STATEMENTS THAT THE DANISH FISHERMEN HAVE LONG

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KNOWN THAT THE QUOTA WOULD BE FILLED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR AND THAT, SINCE THEY WERE PARTICIPANTS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH SET THE QUOTAS, THEY SHOULD OBSERVE THEM. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DANISH FISHERIES ASSOCIATION, SOREN KNUDSEN, HOWEVER, RESPONDED THAT THE FISHERIES ORGANIZATIONS HAVE NOT SPONSORED OR ENCOURAGED THE BLOCKADE BUT HE HAS REFUSED TO PUT ANY PRESSURE ON THE FISHERMEN TO END IT. IT APPEARS, IN FACT, THAT THE

BLOCKADE LEADERS ARE SELF-APPOINTED ONES WHO HAVE SET UP AND AD HOC ORGANIZATION AND ARE ACTING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE OLD ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP.

4) DALSAGER MET NOVEMBER 17 WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES AND WON GENERAL SUPPORT FOR HIS POSITION. AT THIS POINT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT AN OUTCOME BUT THE SITUATION IS BRIGHTENING FOR THE GOVERNMENT. THE SMALL FISHERMEN WHO FISH IN THE SKAGERRAK AND KATTEGAT, WHERE THE PROHIBITION IS NOT IN EFFECT, ARE ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO SEA AND ARE REPORTEDLY WILLING TO BREAK THE BLOCKADE OF THE LARGER FISHING CUTTERS WHO CONCENTRATE ON INDUSTRIAL FISH CATCHES IN THE NORTH SEA. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT HAS VERY LIMITED MEANS OF PHYSICALLY BREAKING THE BLOCKADE AND RECENT LABOR TROUBLES WITH BLOCKADES BY TRADE UNIONS OF INDIVIDUAL FIRMS ARE BEING CITED TO PREVENT POLICE INTERFERENCE. PUBLIC AND EDITORIAL OPINION, HOWEVER, IS BEGINNING TO RUN AGAINST THE FISHERMEN AND THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE HOPE THAT THE BLOCKADE WILL END IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS WITHOUT CAUSING INTERFERENCE WITH OTHER SHIPPING SERVICES.
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